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## CONSTRUCTIVE STUDIES IN THE PRIESTLY ELEMENT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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### IV. THE HISTORY OF WORSHIP IN THE LATER OLD TESTAMENT PERIOD.

§ 36. **The Later Old Testament Period** in the history of worship is the story of *Judaism*, that is, the Jewish religion, which was the daughter of the Hebrew religion. The period, rightly considered, (1) *begins* with the Babylonian exile (§ 30), for at that time were set in motion the great ideas, and the modifications of old ideas, which finally made up Judaism; but (2) the time in which the distinct *establishment* and substantial development of Judaism took place falls within the two centuries of *Persian supremacy* (538–332 B. C.), while (3) the century and a half from 332 B. C. to 165 B. C., the period of *Greek influence*, has for its great achievement the final testing and rounding-out of Judaism.

See KENT, *A History of the Jewish People during the Babylonian, Persian and Greek Periods*, pp. v–vii; WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, pp. 500 f.

§ 37. **Some of the Most Striking Characteristics** of this period are these:

(1) It is the *last* division of the Old Testament period. Is it a climax or an anti-climax? Is it a step higher in the development of the true religious conception, or is it a step lower than has hitherto been taken?

*Cf. Ezra* 1:5.

(2) It is prevailingly *priestly* in its character, for (a) a king no longer sits on Judah's throne; (b) the prophet's voice and authority are now largely a thing of the past; while (c) it is the high-priest who occupies the place of supremacy alike in church and state. In Israel's earliest days the king acted as priest; now the priest acts as king.

*Zech.* 3:1–7;  
6:11.

(3) It is distinctly an *ecclesiastical* situation which presents itself to our view; in fact, we are studying the history of a *church*, not that of a state.

(4) In view of all this, it is natural enough to find **Neh., chap. 8.** that the great event which characterized this period, the event which the sacred historians chronicled with especial emphasis, was the promulgation of *the Levitical law* by Ezra. With this we may compare the giving of the Deuteronomic law, in its relationship to the middle period (§ 28).

§ 38. **The Situation Culminating with the Building of the Temple, 516 B. C.,** presents the following, among other, elements which may be taken as directly growing out of the exile and *leading up* to this later period :

(1) Jeremiah's teaching of *individualism*, which emphasized the fact that each individual sustained a distinct personal relation to Jehovah in addition to his relation to him as a part of the nation. Each man is responsible for his own sins and for those only, and his acceptance with God depends upon himself alone.

**Jer. 31 : 29-34 ;  
cf. Ezek., chap.  
18.**

(2) Ezekiel's teaching of the *new community*, a new city in which no government will be needed, for there will be no crime and no injustice. God will be judge. He will bestow upon the people all that they need. The city will have no obligation to provide for the welfare of the people. God will fight Israel's battles, and Israel's only work will be to bury the corpses of the slain. What, now, will prince and people do? *Engage in worship, continual worship.* The only object of care will be the temple and its materials ; the only taxes will be church taxes. This is Ezekiel's vision of the kingdom of God on earth.

**Ezek., chaps. 40-  
48.**

**Ezek. 39 : 1-16 ;  
cf. Isa. 65 : 17-25 ;  
Ezek. 7 : 25-30.**

(3) There is general recognition of the idea that Israel's religion, and, indeed, its national existence, was not dependent upon a monarchy, nor, indeed, upon any particular form of government.

**Ezek., chap. 18 ;  
Zech. 8 : 20-23.**

(4) There exists a more general readiness to accept the teachings of the prophets, which at the time of their utterance were unheeded or rejected.

**Zech. 1 : 1-6 ;  
7 : 1-7 ;  
cf. Joel 2 : 28, 29.**

(5) The necessity for meeting together in small groups for worship, and the nature of the exercises possible under the circumstances, viz., public reading of scripture and prayer, is leading to the organization of *synagogues*.

**Ezek. 8 : 1 ;  
20 : 1-3 ;  
cf. Ps. 74 : 8.**

**Exod.** 20:23—  
23:33.

**Ezek.**, chaps. 40—  
48;  
*cf.* **Isa.** 51:17-20.

*Cf.* **Ezra** 1:2-4;  
**Ezra** 6:1-12;  
**Ezra** 7:11-26;  
**Neh.** 2:1-9.

**Jer.** 24:1-10.

**Hag.** 2:6-9;  
**Zech.** 2:9-13.

**Zech.** 6:9-12.

**Zech.** 3:8.

**Ezra**, chap. 5;  
*cf.* **Neh.**, chap. 6.

(6) With the book of the Covenant (§ 20), and the book of Deuteronomy (§ 25) which had become the adopted code of religious life, and the more recent and more elaborate program of worship suggested by Ezekiel (§ 31), all in existence, and all rendered *impossible of observance* by the circumstances of the people, there is seen to be a great indefiniteness and uncertainty in the situation, which, while confusing, signified most clearly that the "Law" was not yet finished, and prepared the minds of the people for the more *definite and final* formulation still to be made.

(7) The broad and generous *policy of Cyrus* and his successors on the Persian throne, a policy of state and religion very different from that of preceding history, as well as from that of still later times, made possible in the way of progress and growth what otherwise would have been impossible.

(8) The higher character of the Babylonian Jews, and the special circumstances of their environment, as distinguished from that of the Jews who remained in Judah, forms an important factor in the movement toward national *exclusiveness* which is henceforth to be so prominent.

(9) The expectations, publicly announced, of Haggai and Zechariah that in the political upheavals of the day (*i. e.*, the revolts of the Babylonians in 519 and 515 B. C. against the Persian rule) deliverance and glory would come to Israel; the embassy of four Jews from Babylon, bringing gifts of silver and gold which are made into a crown for Zerubbabel (not Joshua); and the fact that Zerubbabel had been given the name Branch or Sprout—all this points to the suggestion that there were many who still expected a descendant of David to sit upon Israel's throne; but the hope was impossible of realization because (*a*) the whole trend of events was toward the priestly rule, and (*b*) perhaps the Persian authorities may have interfered to prevent an act which would certainly have led to treason, just as they did in the case of the building of the temple.

See CHEYNE, *Jewish Religious Life after the Exile*, p. 15; KENT, *op. cit.*, pp. 147 f.

(10) The residence in Babylon brought the Jews into close touch with an elaborate system of sacrifice, the most important characteristic of which was the *propitiatory* idea. This is significant in view of the fact that henceforward the greatest possible emphasis will be placed upon sacrifice as an *atonement*, and upon prayer for *forgiveness*.

Lev., chap. 16;  
Neh. 1:4-11.

See PAUL HAUPT, "Babylonian Elements in the Levitical Ritual," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. XIX, pp. 55-81; JASTROW, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 668.

(11) Because in Babylon there was no chance to offer sacrifice, such a thing being utterly inconceivable, *fasting* came into great prominence, since "by denying themselves their ordinary food they gave expression to the intensity of their feelings, and at the same time laid before Jehovah a gift which could be presented at any time and at any place."

Isa. 58:3 ff.;  
Ezra 8:21;  
Neh. 1:4;  
Joel 1:14;  
Zech. 7:3-5.

See KENT, *op. cit.*, p. 43; BENZINGER, article "Fasting," § 6, in *Encyclopædia Biblica*; STANTON, article "Fasting," §§ 1b and 3, in HASTINGS' *Dictionary of the Bible*; CHEYNE, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-11.

(12) It was, likewise, because in Babylon the great feast days could not be properly or regularly observed, that greater and greater attention was given to the observance of the *sabbath*, for this could be done anywhere. The nature of the observance was probably much influenced by the customs in vogue in Babylon.

Ezek. 20:12-24.

(13) The removal to another land, and residence in that land, took away the narrow conception of a national god which had always existed among the masses; and now the time has come when first the people as such will accept the great and fundamental doctrine of *one god, i. e., monotheism*. But Jehovah, in becoming the creator of the world, and the ruler of the universe, will not seem to be in as close touch as formerly with his people. He will be holy, in the sense of being separated. He will be higher and more majestic; less familiar and more dignified, because *greater*.

Isa. 44:6.  
Isa. 40:28.

Isa. 40:12-17.

See MONTEFIORE, *Religion of the Ancient Hebrews* (= Hibbert Lectures, 1892), pp. 228, 268 f.; SCHULTZ, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 175 f.; DAVIDSON, article "God," § IV, (4), in HASTINGS' *Dictionary of the Bible*.

(14) According to the manner in which the individual Israelites meet these new and strange conditions they will divide themselves into two classes: (a) those who break away from their old religion because of inability to adopt a larger faith, a broader conception of God, or because of personal advantage gained by giving up the old; and (b) those who, in spite of calamity and misapprehension, maintain themselves steadfast and true. This means a purging of the people, the growing *stronger* of those who are strong, and the weeding out of those who are weak.

See KENT, *op. cit.*, pp. 221 f.; MONTEFIORE, *op. cit.*, pp. 291 ff.

Hag. 2:3;  
Ezra 3:12, 13.

Mal. 2:17.

Isa. 59:9-15.

Cf. the prophet  
who speaks in  
Isa. 42:18-25.

Cf. Ps. 15.

(15) When it was realized quite clearly that the promises of the prophets were not to be fulfilled at the time of the return from exile, there was disappointment and despair on every side. Some became indifferent to God, for they put on *him* the blame for their disappointment. Others, the more devout, took the blame upon *themselves*. With full faith in God's ability to do the things which he had promised, they reasoned in their hearts that this glorious future must have failed of realization because of Israel's sin; yes, because of their own unworthiness this glory was being postponed. They reasoned further: We, who have sinned and have thus made it impossible for the great day of deliverance to be ushered in — *we* must change our ways; we must become more holy; we must increase our piety; our lives must be of such purity *that God will be compelled to keep his promises*. It was this situation and this interpretation of it that prepared the way for "the legalism and the salvation by works of the later Judaism."

See CORNILL, *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 155-9.

§ 39. A Great Reaction Came after the Building of the Temple in 516 B. C., which lasted nearly three-quarters of a century. Concerning this it will be noted —

Neh. 5:1-12;  
Mal. 3:5;  
Mal. 2:10.

(1) That, in all probability, only a few of the Babylonian Jews had yet returned;<sup>1</sup> the weak, narrow, and

<sup>1</sup> The question of dates, always a more or less difficult one, is in this case especially difficult. Cf. KENT, *op. cit.*, pp. 196 ff.; H. E. RYLE, *Ezra and Nehemiah* (Cambridge Bible), pp. xxxviii-xlv; CHEYNE, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-81; C. C. TORREY, *The Composition*

selfish elements were in control; the rulers were greedy of gain, oppressing the poor.

(2) There was in the community a strong tendency toward skepticism. The so-called "scorners" were in the majority, and included in their number not only rulers but priests, and these openly expressed doubts as to all the religious practices and opinions of the times, *e. g.*,

(a) weariness of the routine of sacrifice; (b) what real benefit comes from serving God? (c) why not just as well worship the heathen gods? (d) what difference does it make whether a man does right or wrong?

Mal. 1:13.

Mal. 3:14, 15.

Mal. 2:17.

(3) Under these circumstances the condition of worship was greatly degraded. This was seen in—

(a) The complaint of the priests as to weariness of their occupation.

Mal. 1:13.

(b) The low character of the high-priests, who were among the most guilty.

Neh. 13:4-9, 28.

(c) The readiness of the people to cheat Jehovah in their sacrifices.

Mal. 1:6-14.

(d) The attitude of the priests in general toward the entire service, including the sacrifice, so that the whole ceremonial came into contempt.

Mal. 1:8; 2:8,9.

(e) The failure of the people to pay their tithes, so that the support of the entire system was about to fail.

Mal. 3:8-12.

(f) The marriage of the priests into families of outside nations who served other gods.

Neh. 13:23-28;  
Mal. 2:10-16.

(4) But there still remained the company of "faithful ones," who feared Jehovah, and were called "the just," "the poor and needy" (*cf.* above, § 38, (14), (15)).

Mal. 3:16-18;  
Pss. 69:32-36;  
101:6; 113:7.

§ 40. **Nehemiah's Coming 444 B. C. Was a Great Event** in the history of Judaism.

(1) His work as a reformer and upbuilder of Jerusalem included—

Neh. 1:1-7:5;  
12:27-43.

(a) The rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem as a protection against attack, and as a means of separating the Jews from their heathen neighbors.

Neh. 2:12-6:15.

*and Historical Value of Ezra-Nehemiah*, pp. 51-65; W. H. KOSTERS AND T. K. CHEYNE, article "Ezra" in *Encyclopædia Biblica*; L. W. BATTEN, article "Nehemiah" in *HASTINGS' Dictionary of the Bible*.

Neh., chap. 11.

(b) The repopulating of Jerusalem by bringing in Jews from the surrounding country to dwell there.

Neh. 13: 23-28;  
Neh. 13: 1-3.

(c) The prohibition of marriages with heathen peoples and the driving out of all foreigners from the Jewish community.

Neh., chap. 5.

(d) The restoration to its original owners of all property that had been acquired by mortgages and usury, and the remission of all interest.

Neh. 13: 15-22.

(e) The institution of a stricter observance of the sabbath, which had heretofore been freely violated.

Neh. 13: 10-13;  
Neh. 10: 32-39.

(2) But in addition to all this he turned his attention to the temple and its service. Finding that this was being neglected because the Levites were under the necessity of working in the fields for their support, he took steps to secure the regular payment of the tithes, and appointed faithful officials to distribute them to the Levites. He also made regulations for the proper observance of sacrifices, offerings, and feasts.

§41. The **Work of Ezra**, in all probability, followed that of Nehemiah, the latter having by his masterful skill prepared the way (*cf.* §40). The steps in his eventful career may be summarily classified as follows:

Ezra 7: 1-9;  
8: 21-23.

(1) The *journey* took place in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, occupied a period of four months, and was made without military escort, since Ezra refused to manifest distrust in Jehovah's protection by asking the aid of Artaxerxes.

Ezra 7: 15-23;  
8: 24-34.

(2) The *gifts* said to have been offered by Artaxerxes and his princes for the temple at Jerusalem and its service, together with the requisition made by the king upon the governors of the western provinces and the free-will offerings of the Babylonian Jews themselves, were of great value, and were faithfully guarded and handed over to the temple officials.

Ezra 7: 14-27.

(3) The immediate *purpose* was to establish more securely and develop more elaborately the facilities for worship in the temple. Matters relating to the service and to the temple seem to have occupied the entire time and attention of the reformers for a couple of months after their arrival.



§ 42. **The Formal Adoption of the Law** took place at a public assembly of all the people. The method of procedure was in general the same as that used when the Deuteronomic law was publicly adopted by the nation (see § 25). The law was first read aloud in the hearing of the people. This produced a sense of sin and short-coming on the part of all, and was followed by public confession. After this a solemn covenant was entered into by all the people to observe the requirements of the new law, and this covenant was signed by the representatives of the people, viz., the princes, priests, and Levites.

§ 43. **The Law as Thus Proclaimed and Accepted**—

(1) Is described in Nehemiah as—

(a) Prohibiting marriages with the surrounding heathen. Neh. 10: 30.

(b) Providing for a strict observance of the *sabbaths* and *holy days*. Neh. 10: 31.

(c) Enforcing the observance of the *sabbatical year*, with the accompanying remission of all debts. Neh. 10: 31.

(d) Imposing an annual *tax* of one-third of a shekel per capita for the support of the services of the temple, including the offerings. Neh. 10: 32, 33.

(e) Arranging for the *wood to be furnished* for the burnt-offerings at stated intervals. Neh. 10: 34.

(f) Enjoining the bringing of all *first-fruits* and *first-lings* to the priests at the temple. Neh. 10: 35-37.

(g) Requiring that the people give *tithes* to the Levites in the various cities, and that the Levites bring a tithe of these tithes to the temple at Jerusalem. Neh. 10: 38.

(h) Calling for a hearty support of the temple and constant faithfulness to it. Neh. 10: 39.

(2) Contains regulations unknown to Deuteronomy, e. g., the requirement that the land lie fallow every sabbatical year; the tax of one-third of a shekel for the temple services; the arrangement for the provision of fire-wood; and the law concerning tithes, which departs widely from the Deuteronomic law. Neh. 10: 31b; cf. Deut., chap. 15; Neh. 10: 38; cf. Deut. 14: 22-29; 26: 12-15.

(3) Was substantially the body of regulations found in Exod., chaps. 25-31; 34: 29-40: 38; Leviticus, and Numbers; in other words, the so-called *Levitical code*.

See KENT, *op. cit.*, p. 212; CHEYNE, *op. cit.*, pp. 72 f.; MONTEFIORE, *op. cit.*, pp. 315 ff.; J. ESTLIN CARPENTER AND G. HARFORD-BATTERSBY, *The Hexateuch*, Vol. I, pp. 137-41; WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, pp. 404-10.

§ 44. **The Significance of This Important Event** lies in the following points :

*Cf. Neh. 10:30, 31  
with 13:15-24;  
Ezra 9:1.*

(1) The immediate connection of these new regulations with the times. They grew out of the effort to improve the existing moral and religious condition of the people, and they contain the principles that formed the basis of the work of reform.

(2) The fact that, although some additions remained still to be made to this code, it was substantially complete.

(3) The adoption and incorporation into this code of the important teachings of the prophets. It presented in the concrete and tangible form of specific precepts the great general truths that the prophets had long endeavored to inculcate. It presented truth and duty objectively, and thus met with a greater immediate success than the prophets' work had ever achieved.

*Cf., e. g., Lev. 16:1  
— 17:9; 22:1—  
24:9; 25:11—  
26:2.*

*Lev. 14:10-32;  
22:17-33;  
Exod. 29:38-42.*

(4) The overwhelming preponderance of material in the code relating to service or worship.

(5) The place occupied in it by sacrifice, and the emphasis (see § 38, (10)) placed upon the idea of propitiation and forgiveness.

*Neh. 10:37, 38.*

(6) The great advance made by the priests and Levites; their support is no longer a matter of fitful charity, as it was under the Deuteronomic law, but is made a standing obligation upon the people, over the discharge of which the priests and Levites themselves are given control.

§ 45. **Another Important Headquarters for Worship, the Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim**, grew out of this priestly reformation. The Samaritans were a mixed race, whose ancestors were the poorer Israelites left behind after the deportation of the more influential classes to Assyria at the time of the fall of Samaria, and the Babylonian colonists who were brought to Israel in place of the deported captives. Their religion was thus naturally a corrupt mixture of Israelitish and Babylonian ideas and

*2 Kings 17:6, 24-  
41; cf. 25:11, 12.*

practices. They seem to have been influenced by Josiah's reformation, at least to the extent of regarding Jerusalem as the only lawful place of worship. Hence, when the effort to rebuild the temple was begun, the Samaritans sought to have a part in the work; but, being denied this privilege by the stricter Jews, they seem to have used their influence to obstruct the work. Nehemiah's attitude was one of uncompromising opposition to them. They, for their part, opposed and hindered him greatly in his work of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. The climax of Nehemiah's hostility to them was reached when he expelled the grandson of the high-priest from Jerusalem because he had married the daughter of Sanballat, one of the Samaritan princes. The new law, adopted when feeling was at such a pitch, of course gave the Samaritans no part in the worship at Jerusalem. Consequently they withdrew and built a temple for themselves on Mount Gerizim. In all probability many Jews who had contracted heathen marriages went over to the Samaritan community, to which they were so closely bound by family ties, and thus the community of the faithful was freed from many troublesome elements.

Ezra, chap. 4.

Neh. 2: 18-20.

Neh. 4: 1-23; 6: 1-

19.

Neh. 13: 28.

See MONTEFIORE, *op. cit.*, pp. 351 f.; CHEYNE, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-35; WELLHAUSEN, *op. cit.*, p. 498; GUTHE, article "Israel" (§65) in *Encyclopædia Biblica*.

§46. The Last Century of Persian Rule (425-332) witnessed —

(1) The return of many Jews from the lands in which they had been scattered; for this return, like the first entrance into Canaan, was very gradual.

(2) The growing influence of those who thus returned as over against that of those who had remained.

(3) Great opportunity at first for free growth and expansion because of the weakness of the government of Persia.

(4) Serious calamity, later, because of the contest between Egypt and Persia, a contest in which the Jews were compelled to take part, and in which they suffered as perhaps never before in their history. From psalms of this period we learn that the enemy entered Jerusalem

Pss. 74; 79.

and the temple itself, in which they set up their heathen standards and committed ruthless acts of vandalism, even setting the temple on fire. Not satisfied with this, they burned all the synagogues of the land and slaughtered the people mercilessly, so that blood ran like water in the streets of Jerusalem.

See KENT, *op. cit.*, pp. 224-8; EWALD, *History of Israel*, Vol. V, pp. 165-206.

§ 47. **The Religio-Political Organization of Judaism**, which had thus become crystallized, considered as to its outer form, was a *hierarchy*, a government by priests; for—

Exod. 28 : 1-39 ;  
Lev. 16 : 1-3, 17.

(1) The chief ruler was the high-priest, who had despotic authority over the people, was robed in the royal purple, and alone represented the people before Jehovah in the holy of holies.

(2) The ruling aristocracy was made up of priests, many of them related to the high-priest.

Numb. 18 : 1-7.

(3) The servants of the priests and the sanctuary were the *Levites*.

(4) The religious and civil functions are performed by one class, the priests. There is now no nation ; it is a church.

(5) The *scribes* come forward in response to the need of the times. Since the regulations concerning life and worship were now fixed and written down, there arose a demand for copies of the written law for the use of synagogues and individuals. The scribes who prepared these copies, being naturally better educated than the great majority of the people and spending most of their time in the study of the law, soon came to be looked to as peculiarly well-fitted to interpret the law to those less conversant with it.

See MONTEFIORE, *op. cit.*, pp. 392-6.

§ 48. **The Place and Acts of Worship are Adjusted to the New Situation.**

Pss. 76 : 1, 2 ;  
79 : 1.

(1) The *temple* more and more came to be the center of the whole religious system. The thought of it as the place where Jehovah especially manifested his presence gave it a peculiar sanctity, so that none but the holy

people might enter its precincts. The worst crime of which an enemy could be capable was desecration of the temple. But, while emphasis was thus laid upon the temple, there was growing up alongside of it the *synagogue* with a function of a different kind. These were organized wherever there were a few Jews settled who wished to study the law. They especially supplied the religious needs of the many Jews scattered in many lands who were unable to make frequent visits to Jerusalem in order to participate in the splendid worship of the temple. While the temple services centered about sacrifices and offerings, the service of the synagogue centered in the reading and interpretation of the law.

See MONTEFIORE, *op. cit.*, pp. 390 f.

(2) *Sacrifice* now took on more and more a propitiatory character, being looked upon chiefly as atonement for sin. The most minute regulations were made as to the details of every sacrifice, the manner in which the offering must be laid upon the altar, the disposition to be made of the fat and the blood, the garments to be worn by the officiating priest, etc. It seems as though the temple services must have been a constant succession of sacrifices.

Lev. 6: 24-7: 9;  
16: 1-34;  
Numb., chaps. 28,  
29.

(3) *Times and seasons* received more attention than ever before. The *sabbath* was particularly insisted upon as a sign of the covenant between Jehovah and his people. The penalty for performing any work on the sabbath was death.

Lev. 19: 3;  
Exod. 31: 12-17.

(4) The *sabbatical year* was now made wider in scope, so as to include the land itself which was to be allowed to lie fallow. Furthermore, every fifty years an additional *year of jubilee* was to be celebrated, thus making two sabbatical years in succession. At this time all debts were to be canceled, all Hebrew slaves released, and all land bought during the preceding forty-nine years was to revert to its original owners.

Lev. 25: 1-7.

Lev. 25: 8-55.

(5) The *feasts* provided for are the *Passover* and *Feast of Unleavened Bread*, the *Feast of Tabernacles*, the *New Moon*, the *Feast of Weeks*, the *New Year's Feast*, and the *Day of Atonement*. They were all definitely dated

Lev. 23: 4-8,  
33-36, 39-44;  
Numb. 28: 11 ff.,  
26 ff.;  
Lev. 23: 15 ff.;  
Numb. 29: 1-6;  
Lev., chap. 16.

by month and day, and thus were still farther removed from their agricultural origin. The Feast of Tabernacles is now celebrated in remembrance of the fact that the Israelites dwelt in tents during their journey in the wilderness. There is little difference in the manner of celebrating the various feasts—the most characteristic feature of them all is the endless sacrifices that accompany them. They are all to a large extent of an expiatory nature; nevertheless it was felt necessary to devote one day per year to the special work of expiation, viz., the Day of Atonement.

(6) The public *fasts* which had been observed during the exile in commemoration of the exile and of the disasters connected with it were not incorporated into the new law, but seem to have come to an end in Zechariah's time. That fasting in general was highly esteemed as a means of propitiating Jehovah, and frequently practiced when occasion seemed to demand it, is clear in view of the place given to it in the regulations for the Day of Atonement, and the references to it in Joel and Nehemiah.

(7) *Other acts of worship*.—Constant recourse was had to *prayer* on the part of pious Jews. The chief objects of prayer seem to have been deliverance from dangers, help in trouble, and forgiveness of sin with resulting bestowal of blessings.

That *singing and music* occupied a large place in worship is clear from the allusions to the singers in connection with the dedicatory exercises held when the wall of Jerusalem was completed, and from the large number of psalms that come from this period (see § 50).

*Soothsaying and magic* seem to have been still practiced, but were prohibited by the law, as was also *necromancy*.

*Vows* were recognized and provided for by the law.

§ 49. **The Full Significance of This New Régime** is hard to grasp. The comfort afforded by it to the people cannot be questioned. This strange system, which seems to us, in our love of freedom, so distasteful, was, after all, the highest result yet achieved in the development of Israel's religion. It was based upon the doctrines

Lev. 23:32;  
Numb. 29:7;  
Joel 1:14;  
2:12, 15;  
Neh. 1:4; 9:1.

Ezra, chap. 9;  
Neh. 1:4-11;  
2:4; 5:19;  
6:9, 14; 9:5-38;  
13:22.

Neh. 7:1;  
12:27-29, 42,  
45-47.

Lev. 19:26, 31;  
Lev. 20:6, 27.

Lev. 22:18, 21, 23;  
27:1-8.  
Ps. 84:1, 2.

of the prophet priests, viz., individualism and solidarity.

Its keynote was *monotheism*. Its God was a God whose supreme attribute was holiness, and who expected in every individual of the sacred community a holiness like his own. The underlying thought was the overwhelming *sense of sin*. Now, for the first time, the preaching of the prophets through all the centuries has found its place in the hearts of the people. The prayers are prayers of confession. God has grown greater, and man more humble in the sight of God. God is the God of the whole world. Israel is a company of individuals in a sacred community. Every act of life must be holy. The religious feeling is deeper than ever before and more universal. Men are anxious. The people, burdened as they are with their anxiety, smitten as they are in their consciousness of sin, humbled by their ideal of God, take upon themselves the severest yoke ever placed by religion upon the neck of man. A service worthy of this God supreme must be regulated in its most minute details. The service everywhere presents the thought of sin. Sacrifice is now the great act, and is no longer accompanied by gladness and joy. It represents purification from sin. It is "the chief symbol, and the great mystery of their faith." To be holy one must wash; one must touch no unclean thing; one must not eat what is unclean; one must observe the sabbath, the day of God; and all these acts of worship cultivated the spirit of exclusiveness. Then followed that haughty spirit. "Man who would go up to the hill of Jehovah must now be the one who has not eaten shellfish or pork, nor opened his shop on the sabbath, nor touched a dead body, nor used a spoon handed him by a gentile without washing it." We know the outcome of all this, as it is shown us in the New Testament, but "it kept the people separate from the world and constant to their faith, and made them endure the greatest temptations and the severest persecutions, and so enabled them to preserve the precious treasure committed to them until the time should come when the world was to receive it from their hands."

Lev. 19: 1-4;  
20: 26; 22: 15  
16, 31-33.

Pss. 106: 6-47;  
130.

Lev. 4: 1-6: 7.

Lev., chap. 15;  
Lev., chap. 11;  
Exod. 31: 12-17.

Lev. 21: 1-24.

See CHEYNE, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-81; KENT, *op. cit.*, pp. 213 f., 249 ff.; MONTEFIORE, *op. cit.*, pp. 465-552; WELLHAUSEN, *op. cit.*, p. 497.

§ 50. **The Psalms of the Second Temple are now Written,** and one fails to see the deeper meaning of all this if he forgets that in this period the *greatest number* of the psalms were written. The old prophetic ideas, which the people in the times of the prophet had refused to accept, are now a part of the people's creed and are sung by them with joyous hearts in the congregation. Sacred song becomes preëminently an act of worship. The worship of Jehovah in this act is as joyous and as delightful as it may be sad and gruesome in the act of sacrifice. In these very days, when such emphasis is laid upon the letter of the law, the service of song teaches that to obey Jehovah and to trust in him, to surrender one's self absolutely to him, is the end of all religion. Whatever may be the experience of life, it finds expression in these psalms; whether it be "penitence, intellectual perplexity, domestic sorrow, feebleness, loneliness, the approach of death, the excitement of great events, the agony of persecution, or the quiet contemplation of nature." For each experience there is expression, and the heart-utterances which formed a part of the worship of this period, sung, to be sure, in the midst of the bleating of the lambs which are being slaughtered for the sacrifice, have proven to be the most satisfying utterances for the soul, in its deepest communion with God, which have ever reached the heart of man. The ritual may have been narrow, but the heart of every Jew was free. He was restrained outwardly, but no such restraint hindered him in the working of his mind and heart. Here was contradiction, to be sure, but contradiction no greater than is found in the tendency to substitute the synagogue for the temple, which now exhibits itself in spite of the exclusiveness that was the end and the result of the Levitical system.

§ 51. **The Greek Period of Influence, 332-165 B. C.,** added nothing essential to the content or form of service. It furnished the test of Judaism for which the work of Ezra and Nehemiah had been an unconscious preparation. In the crisis through which the true religion was



to pass the form given to it by these men was of inestimable value. In the words of Cornill:<sup>2</sup>

That the development of Judaism took this special direction was a necessity of the history of religion.

For the heaviest struggle of Judaism still awaited it; the struggle against Hellenism. One hundred and twenty-five years after Ezra, Alexander the Great destroyed the Persian empire and made the Greeks the sovereign people of the eastern world. Through this a profound transformation was begun, which spread with startling rapidity and irresistible might, and led finally to the denationalizing of the East. That which the Assyrian had undertaken by brute force the Hellenes surmounted by the superior power of mind and culture. Greece destroyed the nationalities of the East by amalgamating them with itself and conquering them inwardly. Only one eastern nation withstood the process of dissolution, yea, more, absorbed into itself the good of Hellenism, and thus enriched and strengthened its own existence; and that was the Jewish. If it were able to do this, it was because Ezra and Nehemiah had rendered it hard as steel and strong as iron. In this impenetrable armor it was insured against all attacks, and thus saved religion against Hellenism. And, therefore, it behooves us to bless the prickly rind to which alone we owe it that the noble core remained preserved.

With this we may close our rapid survey of the *history* of the development of Israel's *worship*. In the light of this survey we shall next consider the more important special divisions included in it, viz., the laws, the histories, and the psalms.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 162 f.